

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for recording and playing back video signals, the apparatus comprising:

a) a portable storage device having:

i) a USB male-type connector ~~portable storage device connector of a first type~~ adapted to transfer USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ and which is mounted on the portable storage device, the USP male-type connector ~~portable storage device connector of the first type~~ being for direct connection to a computer ~~first video system~~ having a USB female-type video system connector ~~of the first type~~ for directly connecting to the USB male-type connector of the portable storage device ~~portable storage device connector of the first type~~ to exchange the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ between the portable storage device and the computer ~~first video system~~ to record and playback the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~;

ii) a built-in encoder-and-decoder engine for encoding the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ into compressed video data and for decoding the compressed video data into the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~;

iii) a non-volatile solid-state memory for storing the compressed video data; and

iv) a built-in microcontroller for sending the compressed video data to and receiving the compressed video data from the non-volatile solid-state memory; and

- b) an interface section having ~~an~~ a USB female-type interface section connector ~~of the first type~~ for directly connecting to the USB male-type connector of the portable storage device ~~portable storage device connector of the first type~~, the interface section being for converting ~~between the~~ the USB protocol video signals to HDMI protocol signals ~~of the first type and the video signals of a second type~~, so that the apparatus is operable to exchange the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ and the HDMI protocol video signals ~~second type~~ between the computer first video system and a television second video system through the USB male-type connector of the portable storage device ~~portable storage device connector of the first type~~ and a signal connection between the interface section and the television second video system, the television second video system ~~being for~~ receiving the converted HDMI protocol video signals ~~of the second type~~.
2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ and the HDMI protocol video signals ~~second type~~ also include audio signals which are recorded and played back by the apparatus.
3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the non-volatile solid-state memory comprises at least 8MB of memory capacity.
4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the portable storage device further comprises a protocol controller for converting the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ into a data signal.
5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the signal connection between the interface section and the television second video system further comprises ~~[[an]]~~ a HDMI

interface section connector ~~of the second type~~ mounted to the interface section, the HDMI interface section connector ~~of the second type~~ being for direct connection to a video system HDMI connector ~~of the second type~~ mounted to the television ~~second video system~~ for exchanging the signals of the second type through the HDMI interface section connector ~~of the second type~~ and the video system HDMI connector ~~of the second type~~.

6.-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of ~~Claim 9~~ Claim 1, wherein the interface section further comprises an interface section microcontroller for converting between the USB and HDMI protocol signals and wherein the interface section microcontroller is electrically connected between a USB controller connected to the USB female-type interface section connector ~~of the first type~~ and an HDMI controller connected to the HDMI interface section connector ~~of the second type~~, the interface section connector ~~of the second type~~ being a HDMI connector mounted on the interface section.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the interface section is integral with the television ~~second video system~~.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the interface section is integral with the portable storage device.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the portable storage device, when in use, is not in signal communication with both the computer ~~first~~ and the television ~~second video systems~~.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the interface section is encased in a housing separate from the portable storage device, ~~the first video system and the second video system~~.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 4 wherein the built-in encoder/decoder engine, the built-in microcontroller, and the protocol controller are operable to work in cooperation to convert the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ into compressed video data, the format of the compressed video data being selected from the set consisting of: MPEG 1, MPEG 2, MPEG 4, MP3, MPEG 7 and MPEG 21.

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 15, wherein the built-in encoder/decoder engine is programmable by the a-computer to encode/decode different compressed data formats.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of ~~Claim 3~~Claim 1, further comprising a biometrics-based authentication module coupled to and controlled by the built-in microcontroller, wherein access to the non-volatile memory is granted to a user provided that the biometrics-based authentication module authenticates the user's identity and wherein access to the non-volatile memory is denied to the user otherwise.

18. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of Claim 17, wherein the biometrics-based authentication module includes a thumbprint sensor for acquiring data from the thumbprint of the user.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, further comprising a key matrix coupled to the built-in microcontroller to allow a user to control the recording and playing back of the video signals.

20.-21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) A method for recording and playing back video signals comprising the steps of:

directly connecting a USB male-type connector ~~portable storage device connector of a first type~~ mounted on a portable storage device to a USB female-type video system connector ~~of the first type of a computer first video system~~;

transferring USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ from the computer first video system to the portable storage device through the USB female-type video system connector of the computer first type and the USB male-type connector of the portable storage device ~~portable storage device connector of the first type~~;

encoding the USB protocol video signals into compressed video data using an encoder engine built-into the portable storage device;

storing the compressed video data in a memory section of the portable storage device to record the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~;

disconnecting the USB male-type connector of the portable storage device ~~portable storage device connector of the first type~~ from the USB female-type connector of the computer video system connector of the first type;

directly connecting the USB male-type connector ~~portable storage device connector of the first type~~ mounted on the portable storage device to ~~an~~ a USB female-type interface section connector of the first type of an interface section;

decoding the compressed video data into decoded video signals using a decoder engine built into the portable storage device;

passing the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ through the USB male-type connector of the portable storage device ~~portable storage device connector of the first type~~ and the USB female-type interface section connector of the first type into the interface section;

converting the USB protocol video signals ~~of the first type~~ into HDMI protocol video signals ~~of a second type~~ by passing the signals through the interface section;

passing the HDMI protocol video signals ~~of the second type~~ to a television second video system through a signal connection between the interface section and the television second video system; and

playing back the video signals on the television second video system.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 22, wherein the signal connection between the interface section and the television second video system comprises an HDMI interface connector of the second type mounted to the interface section for connecting directly ~~connected~~ to a HDMI video system connector of the second type mounted to the television second video

~~system for to exchanging the HDMI protocol video signals of the second type through the HDMI interface section connector of the second type and the HDMI video system connector of the television of the second type.~~

24. (Currently Amended) The method Claim 23, wherein the USB protocol video signals of the first type and the HDMI protocol video signals second type also include audio signals which are recorded and played back by the device.

25. (Original) The method of Claim 24 wherein the portable storage device comprises at least 8MB of non-volatile solid-state memory storing video data in compressed format and a built-in encoder/decoder engine for compressing and decompressing the video data.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 25, wherein the portable storage device further comprises a built-in microcontroller for controlling the solid-state memory and a protocol controller for converting the video data to and from USB protocol video signals of the first type.

27.-29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein:
~~the second video system is a television;~~
~~the video system connector of the second type is an HDMI connector;~~
~~the video signals of the second type are HDMI protocol signals;~~
the signal connection between the interface section and the HDMI video system connector of the second type is comprised of an HDMI connector mounted on the interface section for direct connection to the HDMI video system connector of the second type; and
the interface section converts between the USB and HDMI protocol signals.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 30, wherein the interface section comprises an interface section microcontroller for converting between the USB and HDMI protocol signals and wherein the interface section microcontroller is electrically connected between a USB

controller connected to the USB female-type interface section connector of the first type and an HDMI controller connected to the HDMI connector mounted on the interface section.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein the interface section is integral with the television~~first video system~~.

33. (Original) The method of Claim 26, wherein the interface section is integral with the portable storage device.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein the portable storage device, when in use, is not in signal communication with both the computer~~first~~ and the television~~second video systems~~.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein the interface section is encased in a housing separate from the portable storage device,~~the first video system and the second video system~~.

36. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 24 wherein the portable storage device comprises at least 8MB of non-volatile solid-state memory storing the video data in compressed format, a built-in encoder/decoder engine, the built-in microcontroller, and a protocol controller working in cooperation to convert the video data between the compressed format and USB protocol video signals~~of the first type~~, the format of the compressed data selected from the set consisting of: MPEG 1, MPEG 2, MPEG 4, MP3, MPEG 7 and MPEG 21.

37. (Original) The method of Claim 36, wherein the built-in encoder/decoder engine is programmable by the computer to encode/decode different compressed data formats.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 25, further comprising the step of:

granting a user access to the non-volatile memory based upon authentication of the identity of the user by a biometrics-based authentication module coupled to and controlled by the built-in microcontroller; and

denying the user access to the non-volatile memory otherwise.

39. (Original) The method of Claim 38, wherein the biometrics-based authentication module includes a thumbprint sensor for acquiring data from the thumbprint of the user.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 25, further comprising the step of controlling the recording and playing back of the video signals using a key matrix coupled to the built-in microcontroller.